

Dr. William H. Sheldon
ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC EDUCATION SOCIETY

790 Riverside Drive
New York, N.Y. 10032
6450 Cecil Avenue, St. Louis 5, Missouri

November 13, 1968

Dr. William H. Sheldon
C/o Dorothy I. Paschal
790 Riverside Drive
New York, New York 10032

Dear Dr. Sheldon:

I wonder if any X-ray photographs have been taken of the strawberry leaf cents in order to determine whether the strawberry leaf was cut off the reverse of another cent and applied to the obverse of the cent being altered. This would show up very clearly in an X-ray and might solve the entire problem.

You may feel free to call on us for any help which we can give you.

It was very nice seeing you and Mrs. Pascal for that fleeting moment in New York.

Sincerely yours,

ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC
EDUCATION SOCIETY

EPN/atb

original in Sheldon file

TELEPHONE
(212) 234 - 3130



TELEFAX
(212) 234-3381

THE AMERICAN NUMISMATIC SOCIETY
(FOUNDED 1858 • INCORPORATED 1865)
BROADWAY AT 155TH STREET
NEW YORK N.Y. 10032

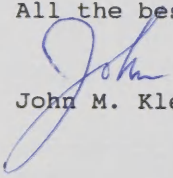
December 3, 1996

Eric P. Newman
Eric P. Newman Numismatic Education Society
6450 Cecil Avenue
St. Louis MO 63105

Dear Eric,

Just to satisfy your curiosity, here is the text which I read from on the Coinage of the Americas Conference on November 9th on the strawberry leaf cent, which will give you an idea of my conclusions. I will be able to write something better for the published volume, because Dan Holmes put the pair of strawberry leaf cents on temporary deposit here for me to study, so now I have THREE to compare! What a privilege! This was so good of Dan Holmes, who seems to be a very decent chap.

All the best,


John M. Kleeberg

Eric- here is the Neismith article
Many thanks.

JMC
May 15, 1997

PLEASE DETACH PROXY HERE, SIGN AND MAIL IN PROVIDED ENVELOPE

ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC EDUCATION SOCIETY

6450 Cecil Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63105

not
sent

John M. Kleeberg
American Numismatic Society
Broadway at 155th St.
New York, NY 10032

May 22, 1997

Dear John:

Thank you for sending me the draft of the Neiswinter article. As you know Frank VanZandt is upset over certain alleged inaccuracies as to the information Neiswinter has been furnished. I wrote VanZandt that I would try to straighten the matter out without causing any serious problems. I advised you and Marie of my feeling.

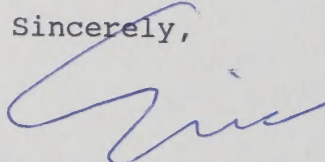
I find the Neiswinter material important and interesting. It needs a great deal of editing and some correction. I return herewith my preliminary comments on the copy you sent me. I hope they are helpful. I have kept a copy of the draft.

I cannot find the photographer's name on the plate copy sent or on my own plate. Where is it? The plate copy sent seems to have "Cent Inventory Levick" in vague writing at the bottom.

I found that some of Crosby's early photographic plates for his 1875 opus have both written and printed pasted on labels. ~~I see no proof or logic that the printed label was first used in the Levick plate before the written identification.~~

I hope I have been helpful.

Sincerely,



Eric P. Newman

ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC EDUCATION SOCIETY

6450 Cecil Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63105

John M. Kleeberg
American Numismatic Society
Broadway at 155th St.
New York, NY 10032

May 27, 1997

Dear John:

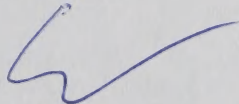
Due to the stimulation of your work on the 4 stem 1793 cents (Strawberries) I cannot get them out of my head. I want to write my thoughts to you but first need some simple facts.

Are the decorative edges on the 4 stem pieces done by a Castaing machine or are they cut by hand engraving. The planchet diameter makes little difference when an adjusted Castaing machine is used. I must determine whether the 4 stem pieces are on blank planchets or on 1793 cents prior to S11 when vine and bar edges were abandoned in favor of the lettered edges. As you know there were a couple of different vine & bar dies used on the Castaing machine for those cents. This was published but I have not found it yet.

Are there any pictures of the 4 stem edges ?

I very much look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Eric P. Newman', with a stylized, sweeping flourish.

Eric P. Newman

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THE AMERICAN NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

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BROADWAY AT 155TH STREET

NEW YORK · N.Y. 10032

June 5, 1997

Eric P. Newman
Eric P. Newman Numismatic Education Society
6450 Cecil Avenue
St. Louis MO 63105

Dear Eric,

I'm glad you're so interested in the strawberry leaf (or four stem) cents. I am still flailing away with my article. I spent last weekend on just one section, entitled, "The Fata Morgana of the Fifth Strawberry Leaf Cent," chasing down references to an additional specimen which Breen wrote about in the Cent Collectors' Forum in the Numismatist for 1957. In one of the fora Breen suggests that there may be five examples of the Crosby 5-E. Actually, he counted two coins twice: the Parmelee-Staples piece and the Saltus-ANS piece. He corrects this in a subsequent forum, but in correcting it he introduces a new error, partly because he asked Sheldon what he meant when he wrote the coins up in Early American Cents, and Sheldon just confuses the matter further. Sheldon tells Breen that his reference in Early American Cents to a coin in condition 1 was a misplaced reference to the unique 5-D. Not so; the coin referred to as condition 1 in Early American Cents was a reference to the Saltus-ANS 5-E. So I have spent some time trying to clarify some very muddy waters without making them muddier still.

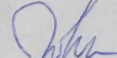
I have been reading through the volume of articles from the Numismatist which Warren Lapp and Herbert Silberman edited and which was published by Quarterman publications, and I have quite enjoyed it. I figured that so long as I am going to learn so much about large cents anyway, I might as well read through the entire literature.

Now, to answer your question in your letter of May 27th. I have sat down and compared all the vine and bars edges of regular 1793 cents in our trays, and what I have found is that there are two basic dies: one used for the chain cents and one for the wreath cents. I did not know that this was

already published, so I am glad you mentioned it - I shall see if I can track the reference down. The wreath cents have a characteristic depression (which would correspond to a lump in the die) on the edge. With good enough specimens and training of one's eye one can line up the edges of two coins and see if the edge dies match. I was able to match up most of the wreath cents with each other and most of the chain cents with each other (on some of them, the edge was just too worn) but chain to wreath edge do not match - hence two dies. The strawberry leaf cents/four stem cents do not match with the chain cent and the wreath cent edges; and among the three which I have to study, thanks to Dan Holmes, they do not match up with each other. So I think the edge was added by hand.

There are no photographs of the edges, but I think I will have Frank Deak make some for publication with my article when he returns from a vacation.

All the best,



John Kleeberg

ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC EDUCATION SOCIETY

6450 Cecil Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63105

John Kleeberg
American Numismatic Society
Broadway at 155th St.
New York, NY 10032

June 10, 1997

Re: Strawberry/4 stem
1793 cents

Dear John:

Thank you very much for further checking the edges of the Strawberry cents at my request. Your June 5, 1997 report is extremely helpful to my thinking. If you cannot locate the data on the edge varieties of normal 1793 cents try PennyWise or Del Bland (perhaps Loring).

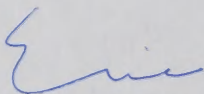
If the edges on each of the strawberry cents are different from each other and from the genuine edges then they are individually hand cut. My theory thus may be different from yours. No one making counterfeits for circulation would cut separate edge designs on each coin. They would prepare an edge die or have no edge design at all. Thus I reach the conclusion that the strawberry cents are forgeries for collectors made at a later period when 1793 cents were rare just as the Smith of Ann Street pieces were.

While the Smith of Ann Street forgeries are alterations of genuine cents the strawberry forgeries are on planchets which were struck on blank planchets or on cut down or polished down worn coins. You state that the diameters differ on strawberry cents. If false dies were used to make them look worn then we have a normal pattern of deceit.

I will write this up in more detail if you wish me to make a separate comment as you suggested.

What a fascinating problem this is !

Sincerely,



Eric P. Newman

*create strawberry cents and then artificial
buffing used to*

ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC EDUCATION SOCIETY

6450 Cecil Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63105

August 1, 1997

Mr. John Kleeberg
American Numismatic Society
Broadway at 155th Street
New York, NY 10032

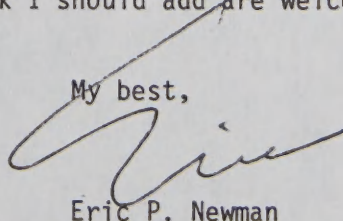
Dear John:

I am appreciative of your suggestion for me to write an addenda to your paper on Strawberry Leaf cents and I will be glad to do so. I will not be able to begin it until I return from Africa on August 21, 1997. It will be subject to your approval naturally.

In the meanwhile, would you confirm certain of the following facts for me if they are accurate:

- 1) There are 4 known strawberries, all of which seem to be from the same obverse die and 3 of which seem to have the same reverse die.
- 2) The vine and bars edge decoration to the extent that it exists on the strawberries is not the same as on any vine and bars edge decoration on other regular 1793 cents.
- 3) The edge decoration on each strawberry differs from any other strawberry indicating separate hand cutting. It would be great to have pictures of the three edges you now have possession of or at least portions of them. Please describe any differences in the vine or in the bars compared to regular 1793 edges. How many regular decorative edges are there on regular 1793 wreath cents?
- 4) Please furnish the diameter or diameters of each strawberry and the applicable weight of each.
- 5) Any other facts you think I should add are welcome.

My best,



Eric P. Newman

EPN:bv



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Fax: 212/234-3381
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THE AMERICAN NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

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NEW YORK · N.Y. 10032

October 29, 1997

Eric P. Newman
Eric P. Newman Numismatic Education Society
6450 Cecil Avenue
St. Louis MO 63105

Dear Eric,

Thank you very much for your very fine letter to the American Association of Museums. I shall do my best to be worthy of your description.

Here is my latest draft on the strawberry matter; and some other communications too. Your arguments for an attribution to Smith have enabled me to refine my counter-arguments. Look through it and decide if you want to do a counter-blast of the trumpet, as John ~~Locke~~ would say. All suggestions are welcome.

Knox

All the best,

John Kleeberg
John Kleeberg

11/7/97

Re: the Strawberry Leaf Cent

To: John Kleesberg

From: ERIC P. NEWMAN

It is a wonderful study.

1. Are you going to include the Levick plate as an illustration because you refer to some of the cents?
2. Have you studied my separate Levick plates which have 3 counterfeits on them (obv + rev.)? These have never been published. I sent copies to Frank van Zandt for study at his request. I don't think he has done anything on them. Frank Deak made recent photos of my originals so negatives are in ANS files

Page 19 line 9. I do not understand the word "copper"

Page 27 line 1 "on" instead of "at"

Page 28 line 8. spelling of "exercises"

I would put content of line 9 to end of page 28, all of page 29, all of page 30, and 14 lines of page 31 into a footnote, rather than in the text. It distracts from the ^{main} theme too much.

Page 34 You have a double negative which says what you
line 16 don't intend to say. Please correct it.

Page 35 last line. Omit the words "strawberry leaf". This is confusing as written. You are talking about reverses only.

For my conclusions which vary from yours, see next page.

You have not commented on whether the wear on strawberry cents is natural or artificial.
Is the wear equal on both sides and in all higher areas?

11/7/97 To John A. Kleberg
From Eric P. Newman

Accepting the finding that the edge decoration on each strawberry leaf cent differs from the edge decoration of the other strawberry leaf cents and that the edge decoration was cut into each such coin by manually controlled tools and punches and not by casting methods, I believe the production of strawberry leaf cents are forgeries for collectors and not counterfeits for circulation. For a counterfeiter to go to the trouble of making one obverse die and two reverse dies and then put the edge decoration on each piece ^{separately} by hand ~~separately~~ either before or after striking is not practical or profitable. He would never have made enough money to have the project be worthwhile. He would have left off the edge decoration or selected a cent type which had no edge decoration. The application of an edge decoration ^{in my opinion} was to deceive further. Thus the strawberry leaf cents would probably have been made in the latter part of the 50 year period since their dating ~~in my opinion~~ as I see it.

If you wish to include my theory please feel free to do so. If you prefer me to sponsor it ^{please} put my name on it as an addendum or something. If you think I am totally wrong please tell me now.

ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC EDUCATION SOCIETY

6450 Cecil Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63105

November 7, 1997

Re: **The Strawberry Leaf Cent**

TO: John Kleeberg

FROM: Eric P. Newman

Post-it™ Fax Note 7671		Date	# of pages ▶ 2
To	John Kleeberg	From	EP Newman
Co./Dept.	ANS	Co.	
Phone #		Phone #	
Fax #	212-234-3381	Fax #	

It is a wonderful study.

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EPN/bv

ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC EDUCATION SOCIETY

6450 Cecil Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63105

November 7, 1997

TO: John Kleeberg

FROM: Eric P. Newman

Accepting the finding that the edge decoration on each strawberry leaf cent differs from the edge decoration of the other strawberry leaf cents and that the edge decoration was cut into each such coin manually by tools and punches and not by Castaing methods, I believe the production of strawberry leaf cents are forgeries for collectors and not counterfeits for circulation. For a counterfeiter to go to the trouble of making one obverse die and two reverse dies and then put the edge decoration on each piece separately by hand either before or after striking is not practical or profitable. He would never have made enough money to have the project be worthwhile. He would have left off the edge decoration or selected a cent type which had no edge decoration. The application of an edge decoration in my opinion was to deceive further. Thus the strawberry leaf cents would probably have been made in the latter part of the 50-year period after 1793, as I see it.

If you wish to include my theory, please feel free to do so. If you prefer me to sponsor it, please put my name on it as an addendum or something. If you think I am totally wrong, please tell me now.

EPN/50



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BROADWAY AT 155TH STREET

NEW YORK, N.Y. 10032

November 21, 1997

Eric P. Newman
Eric P. Newman Numismatic Education Society
6450 Cecil Avenue
St. Louis MO 63105

Dear Eric,

Thank you very much for your memorandum of November 7th with your comments on my article and the strawberry leaf matter. I am sorry I have been out of touch, but I have been in and out of the Society over the past few weeks on my research leave, and did not want to write to you about the strawberry matter until I had got (gotten? If Shakespeare could use it, why not me?) your corrections incorporated into my text. I have incorporated all of them, except that I have not moved the excursus on Sheldons' reliability to a footnote, because we no longer have footnotes - the Society has now adopted the Social Science method of citation, so everything has to go in the text. I could put it in an appendix, but I feel since the text has a modular structure, it can go just as well in the main text as in an appendix. If you consider an appendix better, I can always move it there.

The enclosed copies will show how I incorporated your statement into my text. I copied it verbatim, except I omitted the words "by tools and punches" after "manually," because I do not believe that the maker of the strawberry leaf cents had access to any punches whatsoever.

All the best,


John Kleeberg



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Fax: 212/234-3381
E-mail: info@AmNumSoc.Org

THE AMERICAN NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

(FOUNDED 1858 • INCORPORATED 1865)

BROADWAY AT 155TH STREET

NEW YORK · N.Y. 10032

October 22, 1998

Eric P. Newman
Eric P. Newman Numismatic Education Society
6450 Cecil Avenue
St. Louis MO 63105

Dear Eric,

We spent hours, I think, discussing the strawberry leaf matter, so much of the work which went into this volume was your effort.

This is also to remind you not to get too distracted by gold matters - copper still has many important claims on our attention!

All the best,

John Kleeberg



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E-mail: Info@AmNumSoc.Org

THE AMERICAN NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

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BROADWAY AT 155TH STREET

NEW YORK · N.Y. 10032

November 11, 1998

Eric P. Newman
Eric P. Newman Numismatic Education Society
6450 Cecil Avenue
St. Louis MO 63105

Dear Eric,

Thank you for your letter of November 10th, which arrived here in twenty-four hours.

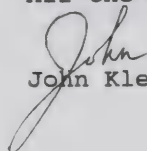
We had a very good session on Saturday. The papers were all, on the whole, very well done. Even though you were not present in person, you were present very much in spirit, because so many papers started by saying, "When Eric Newman determined this..." or "After Eric Newman's study of this..." It was also very good to see the display of the Bungtown coppers which Mike Ringo borrowed from you for the display. The only problem is that Bungtown coppers are hard to display well - they tend to look like undifferentiated brown spots. But connoisseurs know what is there.

Have you obtained a copy of the Cobwright publication on evasive halfpence from Ringo? He has bought a batch of them. It replaces Atkins. Ringo tells me that there are many typos in Atkins, which is particularly disastrous with evasives... Among other publications, I finally got around to reading Carlotto's work on Vermont coppers. He did a fine job. He did a particular service for us by clearing up the status of the dubious Ryder 5 pieces and the fantastic Ryder 40.

Your data about coppersmiths is interesting. I read the text a little differently, however. I think the point being brought out is that at a time of rising copper prices (because of the French Revolutionary Wars) cents would soon reach the "bullion point," at which they contained more than a cent worth of copper. At that time coppersmiths (honest ones) could buy up cents for a cent, and obtain a cheap source of copper. The United States

eventually had to deal with this by reducing the weight of the cent, which happened by presidential decree at the end 1795. The reduced weight varieties are Sheldon 76b and higher. The problem was that coppersmiths were melting heavy weight cents to patch kettles.

All the best,


John Kleeberg

Arts and Sciences

Department of Chemistry

Eric P. Newman
6450 Cecil Avenue
Clayton, MO 63105

Dear Eric,

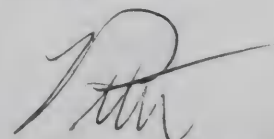
I have had a bad conscience for weeks for not having written to thank you for the very interesting evening at the St. Louis Explorers Club meeting. Meeting many of the members and hearing the presentation of the project to promote the private development of space travel was most stimulating. The encouragement of private development of more efficient space vehicles makes a lot more sense to me than the space shuttle flights, particularly this week's nostalgia event.

Also please tell Evelyn that I have heard many people raving about the butterfly project. I am looking forward to taking Carole to see it one of these weekends. I've been swamped with my 350-student organic chemistry lecture course.

I've just been reading the proceedings of the 1996 COAC conference on the large cent. I wish I had been there, since there are several points I would have liked to raise with the paper presenters. I think John Kleeberg's theory of the strawberry leaf 1793 as a counterfeit for circulation depends entirely on how much work was put into the edge decoration. I was disappointed at his not presenting photographs of the edges, not even that of the ANS specimen. If it was a crude, quick job done in a minute or two with a file, then counterfeiters might have been able to make a profit; otherwise your view as quoted by Kleeberg must prevail. In any case the edge is crucial, and edge photographs should have been included. It is a pity that Kleeberg was his own editor, since his paper would have profited from considerable tightening.

I'd be interested in your views on the dies illustrated in Craig Sholley's paper. Figures 1, 2, 3, and 5 show dies with cylindrical necks just larger in diameter than the designs, yet the dates they carry are in the period prior to the use of a "close collar" if I have this term correct. I don't believe that such necks would have been used unless one were striking in a close collar, since sloping necks would have increased considerably the die life. Was there a "loose collar" and an ejection mechanism that required the use of dies with narrow cylindrical necks? Or are these all dies for restrikes made with a close collar?

I hope you are well. I know you are busy. I look forward to our next opportunity for good numismatic conversation. Your remarks about John Ford during our ride too and from Schneidhorsts were extremely interesting to me. All the best!



1860s, William Woodward, mentions the name of Breschemin of Philadelphia (Smith 1992c, 417). But I believe that the weight, the die link, and the general appearance of the strawberry leaf cent means that it is not a tooled product by Smith, Breschemin, or their colleagues.

Eric P. Newman and I have discussed the strawberry leaf cents extensively: he is a partisan of theory (3), just as I am a partisan of theory (5). He argues:

Accepting the finding that the edge decoration on each strawberry leaf cent differs from the edge decoration of the other strawberry leaf cents and that the edge decoration was cut into each such coin manually and not by Castaing methods, I believe the production of strawberry leaf cents are forgeries for collectors and not counterfeits for circulation. For a counterfeiter to go to the trouble of making one obverse die and two reverse dies and then put the edge decoration on each piece separately by hand either before or after striking is not practical or profitable. He would never have made enough money to have the project be worthwhile. He would have left off the edge decoration or selected a cent type which had no edge decoration. The application of an edge decoration in my opinion was to deceive further. Thus the strawberry leaf cents would probably have been made in the latter part of the fifty year period after 1793. (Newman 1997)

We have had many friendly conversations about this, but neither has been able to convince the other of his position. Theory (3), a fake of the mid-nineteenth century, is to my mind contradicted by the pedigree history. The first example was discovered probably in 1845, and certainly by 1868; the second in 1877; the third also in 1877; and the fourth in 1941. If the cents were fakes, they would have emerged onto the market around the same time. The coins also do not have the feel of nineteenth century fakes. Nineteenth century fakes tend to be more attractive, with flashy high relief, like Edwin Bishop's Washington half cent, or struck in a flashy metal, like gold.

This leaves us with possibilities 1, 2, and 5: a pattern, a normal cent, or a counterfeit of the time.

I looked very closely at the letters on the reverse of the three specimens I could examine, and I concluded that they were hand cut, not made with punches (figs. 5, 6, and 7). On the 5-E, the N in ONE is small, and does not have much of a base to its left foot; the N in CENT is bigger, and has a big base to its left foot. The lower serif of the first S in STATES is lined up; the lower serif of the second S in STATES

"The Strawberry leaf Cent"
COAC 11/4/96
America's large Cent

Viewpoint

Congress can avoid disaster with \$1 coin

By James C. Benfield

A "train wreck" in U.S. currency will occur around the year 2000 unless Congress and the Treasury Department acknowledge and act on very obvious information.

Government inventories of the Susan B. Anthony \$1 coin fell by more than 130 million coins in 1995 and 1996 to 173.2 million coins on Dec. 31. At this rate, the government supply will be totally depleted before the end of 1999.

Because millions of transit passengers and hundreds of vending machine operators (and their customers) depend on the Anthony dollar every day, the

U.S. Mint must begin the process of reminting this unpopular coin before the end of the 105th Congress in 1998.

Simultaneously with the imminent reminting of the Anthony \$1 coin, the Federal Reserve and the Bureau of Engraving and Printing are proceeding to redesign the nation's paper money, with the new \$1 bill scheduled for early 2001.

Transit fare collection machines that accept \$20, \$10, \$5 and \$1 bills will have to be reprogrammed four different times and fine-tuned many more times as each denomination is redesigned in its turn. This will be expensive and inconvenient for customers.

But the real headache will be the millions of vending machines that won't accept the new dollar bills. However, they will accept Anthony dollar coins, as most machines manufactured since 1980 can handle them.

The train wreck can be avoided by issuing a golden-colored coin with a smooth edge. The coin will replace the \$1 bill, but consumers will have a paper alternative with the \$2 bill.

Most importantly, such a move will save the government \$2.28 billion in the first five years, according to estimates of the Federal Reserve System and the General Accounting Office. As we attempt to balance the federal budget,

this may be the best argument of all for a well-designed \$1 coin.

James C. Benfield is executive director of the Coin Coalition, a lobbying group that favors a new \$1 coin.

Viewpoint is a forum for the expression of opinion on a variety of numismatic subjects. The opinions expressed here are not necessarily those of Numismatic News.

To have your opinion considered for Viewpoint, write: David C. Harper, Editor, Numismatic News, Iola, WI 54990.

Letters

compete in our coin market?

I wonder what President John F. Kennedy, commander of "P.T. Boat 109," would think of the U.S. Mint marketing commemorative coins for Japan the same year a commemorative in his name is issued.

Mike Kipp
Hanford, Calif.

Counterfeit debated

The American Numismatic Society did another outstanding job for the U.S. numismatist.

Every November, the ANS convenes a one-day Conference of American Coinage. There are eight to 10 speakers, all experts in their field, who share their latest research with collectors.

Dr. John Kleeberg, the curator of American Coins at ANS, was one of the featured speakers. Dr. Kleeberg has a background in European as well as U.S. monetary history. This is a complicated field which he handled brilliantly.

More importantly, the tremendous research facilities at ANS helped Dr. Kleeberg come up with great insight and intuitive points that raise a spectrum of worthwhile questions and suggestions.

This year's COAC conference was on U.S. large cents. Dr. Kleeberg came up with a question and suspicion that knocked everybody's socks off. If you are a large cent collector, you are familiar with the "Strawberry cents."

In 1793, the first year of issuance of large cents, a sprig of leaves appeared directly under the bust and above the date on the obverse of a number of issues.

In addition, there were certain cents,

very rare, that had the appearance of clover leaves or other flora in this same location. Dr. Kleeberg realized these other flora, which we refer to as the Strawberry type, were not as well delineated and, in general, not up to Mint standards. In other words, they were botched.

So, Dr. Kleeberg realized that these particular pieces may not have been manufactured in the Mint and could have been contemporary counterfeits. This is a most interesting possibility, which is at this stage still conjecture. It is amazing that Dr. Sheldon, Homer Downing and other great numismatists did not come up with this line of academic question.

Dr. Kleeberg is to be congratulated. It is wonderful that our enlightened researchers test old theories and old ways of the past. Accolades go to Dr. Kleeberg and the ANS for improving and enlightening collectors as to the possibilities that future numismatists will reveal. This kind of research does not detract from, or take away value.

On the contrary, it helps to make our quest more interesting and more varied. As far as I am concerned, I love to acquire contemporary counterfeits because they add to the mystique and insight of the past.

All I can say is, ANS, keep up the good work and let's have more like it.

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Address letters to Editor, Numismatic News, 700 E. State St., Iola, WI 54990. All letters must be signed and include a return address. Numismatic News reserves the right to edit all letters.



I have read with great interest ^{the draft of} your article on the Strawberry leaf cents and we have ~~talked about~~ discussed the topic from time to time. The problem has been tossing about in my mind for many years.

Your findings have ~~enabled~~ enabled me to apply new thoughts which I want you to review and perhaps comment on.

^{none of} The fact that the four strawberry cents ~~have~~ ^{used for any of the} ~~edge~~ put on by the Castaing machine ~~of 1793 is~~ normal 1793 cents but ~~do~~ have a vine and bar ~~edge~~ decorated ~~edge~~ applied crudely by tooling is very important. The diameters of these four differ slightly ^{and are not less than regular 1793} ~~the~~ weights of the ~~pieces~~ ^{planets} although ~~subjected to~~ appearing to have heavy wear ~~are in the appropriate range before the 1794 change~~ ^{in weight} ~~reduction~~ are above those of 1794 and thereafter which ~~are~~ ^{were} reduced by ~~the~~ the change of law as to weight.

This means that genuine 1793 copper cents were not used to produce the strawberries because genuine 1793 cents would ~~have~~ normally decorated edges. (Check claim cents) Cents dated 1794 and thereafter would not be heavy enough.

~~If copper planchets were~~

This indicates the planchets used were unstruck pieces or other ^{larger copper} coins whose designs were cut away

^{nipple} The design detail on the four strawberry cents ~~indicated~~ shows ^{the same} design ^{for all} ~~obverses~~ with a ~~rounded~~ ^{nick} ~~point~~ ^{point}. ~~It shows~~ ^{the same} three of the four ^{designs are the same} reverse with the ONE CENT high ~~and~~ ^{the} the found reverse ~~with~~ the ONE CENT centered. The high ONE CENT design is first used on U.S. cent coinage in 1795?

953530
476765
953530

^{documentation}
~~comments on~~
the first ~~observations~~ of the Strawberry cents
was simultaneous with the Smith "counterfeits".
in 1868 when ~~he~~ ^{he} ~~described both~~
mentioned both types. Each Smith of Ann Street
counterfeit was actually a genuine cent (usually, dated
^{and with edge direction}
1794) which was skillfully tooled by lowering the
field to create a sharper design outline. ~~the~~
Smith was a highly skilled artist and changed shapes,
outlines, ~~the design, slightly when desirable~~
^{letters and numbers}
~~leaves, berries, as he wished to a minor degree~~
as he wished. Each Smith alteration was different
and he made a reasonable quantity of pieces. He
could only be doing that work to create varieties
ad to create beautifully appearing pieces. Smith
operated during the early 1860s when enthusiasm
~~for the~~ 1793 cent varieties was great.

~~It~~ It might be asserted that Smith was an
apprentice when the Strawberry experiment took place
and ^{later} graduated to tooling perfection ~~in his~~ when he
~~extremely fine pieces did his~~
later produced his extremely fine ~~alterations~~ Smith "counterfeits".
~~the difference to the original is that is not known and~~
~~not essential to know. the~~ the make of the Strawberry
cents was no competitor for Smith.

~~It is~~ ^{in 1869} It is "hearsay" ^{and} that the first Strawberry cent
appeared in 1845 ~~and~~ that ~~is not~~ ~~may~~ may or may not
be reliable.

~~As to~~ As to ~~its~~ ^{its} maker of the Strawberry
cents being a counterfeiter ~~that seems~~ for
circulation that seems untenable. No one would
make counterfeits ~~for~~ ⁱⁿ for circulation. ~~and~~
No one using a ^{real} design introduced in 1795
would be making ~~heavier~~ ^{or lighter} cents dated 1793. No
one in 1795 would ^{make} ~~then~~ ^{make} copper cents
which were ~~with increased~~ ^{heavier} weight ~~than~~ ^{than} ~~he would make~~
~~would not~~ ^{would not} make lighter ones.
if he selected a later date ~~than~~ when lighter
one were in use.

The extreme similarities of the four obverse and their difference from any ~~one~~ regular 1793 cent ^{or other} varieties means that ~~there is~~ one obverse die was used ~~to make~~ ^{the Strawberry cent obverse} unless each ~~such cent~~ ^{such cent} was separately ^{created by} tooling. The similarity of the three high ONE CENT designs and their difference from any ^{regular} reverse cent variety of any date means that a separate reverse die was used for those three Strawberry cents unless each such cent ^{reverse} was separately created by tooling. The reverse with the centered ONE CENT would have been created by a separate die ~~unless it was created by tooling~~.

If tooling was used to create any ^{faces} of the four Strawberry cents ~~in its~~ ^{to} entirely ~~there would be little purpose reason for identical appearance~~ there would be much more work ~~than~~ then cutting a die to make a number of the coins.

The logic therefore seems to indicate dies were used.

~~The die maker~~ ^{After the dies were cut} ~~After the~~ ^{took} the striking ~~would then take place~~. The result was apparently a disaster in appearance with tremendous weakness ~~in the outside~~ in the area near the circumference. ~~Further tooling of the coin itself~~ ^{to sharpen its appearance} was an option and could have been done, but this is ~~not~~ difficult in view of the abuse the coins took thereafter. The coins ~~do not~~ ^{do not} ~~show~~ ^{show} natural wear from circulation. They show a buffing ^{on both sides} which is ~~unnatural~~ artificial and is too uniform for high areas and low areas, for center areas and for perimeter areas, etc. Thus ~~it was~~ the wear was deliberate. It could not have been for samples ~~or~~ for coining contracts as it would assure repetition. It had to be for creating varieties for collectors.